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S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

GOVERNORS

OF THE

MAGDALEN-HOSPITAL,

L O N D O N:

On Wednesday the 28th of May, 1788.

By the Rev. GEORGE HENRY GLASSE, M. A.

Rector of HARWELL, MIDDLESEX:

Late STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

Published by the Desire of the GOVERNORS of the HOSPITAL.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the H O S P I T A L.

M,DCC,LXXXVIII.

*At the Annual Meeting of the Governors of the Magdalen
Hospital, the 28th Day of May, 1788.*

R. E. S. O L V E D,

THAT the Thanks of this Court be returned to the Rev.
GEORGE HENRY GLASSE, M. A. for his excellent Sermon
preached this Day before the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer,
and Governors of this Charity, at the Chapel of this Hospital, and
that he be desired to cause the same to be printed and published.

By Order of the Court,

A. WINTERBOTTOM, } *Joint Secretaries.*
JOHN HEYLYN, }



T O
The R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E
F R A N C I S,
E A R L O F H E R T F O R D, &c. &c.
P R E S I D E N T;
The R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E R O B E R T L O R D R O M N E Y,
H I S G R A C E t h e D U K E o f N O R T H U M B E R L A N D,
The R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E J A C O B E A R L O F R A D N O R,
The H O N O U R A B L E H E N R Y H O B A R T, M. P.
G E O R G E M U S G R A V E, E s q.
The H O N O U R A B L E P H I L I P P U S E Y,
V I C E - P R E S I D E N T S;
A L E X A N D E R B E N N E T T, E s q.
T R E A S U R E R;
The A N N U A L C O M M I T T E E;
A n d t h e R e s t o f t h e G O V E R N O R S
A N D
S U B S C R I B E R S
T O T H E
M A G D A L E N - H O S P I T A L,
T H I S S E R M O N,

P r e a c h e d a n d p u b l i s h e d a t t h e i r R E Q U E S T,

I S, W I T H A L L R E S P E C T, D E D I C A T E D

B y t h e i r m o s t f a i t h f u l h u m b l e S e r v a n t,

H A N W E L L,
29 M a y, 1788.

G E O R G E H E N R Y G L A S S E.

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THE RIGHT HONORABLE

F. R. A. N. C. I. S.

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GEORGE HERBERT

M I C A H, CHAP. VII. VER. 8.

Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise: when I sit in darknefs, the Lord shall be a light unto me.

YOU have here a song of rapture, uttered by the penitent soul, when, cheared by the reviving influence of faith and hope, she rises from fear and despondency to a foretaste of immortality and glory. Long prostrate in the dust, she dared not so much as lift up her eyes to heaven: but now, being clad in her Redeemer's righteousness, she soars as on the wings of a dove that is covered with silver, and her feathers with gold, seeking that presence, which once she avoided with conscious guilt, desiring to hear that voice, which once imparted nothing but consternation and horror.

Delivered

Delivered from the perils which threatened her destruction, she looks down with triumph on the malignant enemy, from whose snare she hath been rescued, by the powerful arm of JEHOVAH. Greater than the temptations of Satan are his tender mercies. He can say to the contrite spirit, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." He can say to the impetuous adversary, as to the waves of the sea, "Peace; be still." "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further."

There is not, I am persuaded, one of my hearers, to whom it can be necessary to point out, how justly these observations are applicable to the objects of that generous institution, for which I am an advocate this day—that generous institution, whose peculiar excellence it is, to speak peace to the troubled soul; to comfort them that mourn; to raise from the utmost possible misery to a state of well-founded hope and joy, the most helpless, the most unfortunate of human beings.

THE dignity of man, and the pre-eminence of his nature, are subjects on which the pride of philosophy dwells, and perhaps dwells too fondly. At least the grounds on which it forms those pretensions are mistaken, and the inferences unfairly drawn. For if this superiority hath any real existence, it is not wholly derived from his sovereignty over the creation---not from those faculties of the soul, which distinguish man from the other works of God --- not from reason, or intellect

intellect, or speech, or memory. The candidate for immortal happiness rests not his claim on such foundations as these. He considers it as his most glorious distinction, that he is admitted to the privileges of the gospel, and the covenant of mercy in Jesus Christ; whereby all are encouraged to implore His grace, and enabled to follow His example.

But can they, who are altogether born in sin, form any rational hope of imitating the perfections of Him, who knew no sin? Can human infirmity tread in His footsteps, who was the power of God, and the wisdom of God? Difficult as this may appear, we are sure that it is possible, because it is commanded. It is the very duty of our christian profession. And while it is practicable by individuals, it is still more successfully accomplished by the united efforts of numbers, conspiring in one common cause of mercy and benevolence.

To illustrate this by a few well-known examples.

Our Lord and Saviour, while on earth, went about doing good. When the ear heard him, then it blessed him; and when the eye saw him, it gave witness unto him—sparkling perhaps with joy, or glistening with a tear of gratitude. He suffered the little children to come unto him. He was eyes to the blind, and feet
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was he to the lame. He called unto him the poor and needy, the fatherless and friendless. He healed the diseases of the soul, as well as those of the body : sorrow and sighing abode not in his presence—sickness and pain fled from before him. The lunatic, whether affected by melancholy or frenzy, by his power was restored to reason, and serenity of mind. And when the hapless female, who had gone astray from the path of virtue, stood before him, speechless and self-condemned, he read the anguish of her penitent heart, and graciously dismissed her with words of pardon. “ Go,” said he, “ and sin no more.”

On this last instance of heavenly mercy your thoughts must surely dwell with conscious pleasure ; since you cannot but feel that you are even now following the divine example, in a close imitation of that attribute of the Almighty, on which the hope, the happiness of every one of us depends : for he is merciful and long-suffering, a God who delighteth to pardon, and healeth the broken spirit.

LET not the pride of unfallen virtue condemn the daughters of sorrow, when bereft of that innocence, which is the best dowry, the brightest ornament of their sex. In many, if not in all their tragical stories, there are circumstances, which cannot but melt the feeling heart, till the voice of censure is stifled by the tears

tears of pity. And let not the seducer, who contrives to withdraw himself from infamy, while he leaves the partner of his sin to drink the bitter cup to its very dregs—let him not reflect with cold indifference on the calamities he has occasioned. Let him bestow some compassion on the wretch, whose ruin he has accomplished; whose peace in this world, and whose hopes of eternal happiness in another, he has too successfully laboured to destroy.

That there are no miserable females, who from time to time fall victims to their own depravity, we are not so romantic as to assert. But these are few in number, in comparison with the multitudes who are continually overthrown by the stratagems and artifices of Man. Honour, liberality, spirit, forbid such attempts; yet to give effect to them, the Libertine employs his utmost assiduity; and boasts of his success, as of some great and brilliant achievement. And has he not, think you, a glorious triumph, in prevailing over the virtue of an unwary and unprotected being, whose very innocence is made an engine in the hands of her betrayer to accomplish her destruction?

Whom does he select, as the objects of his treachery? Are they such as abound in riches, or are supported by numerous and powerful connections? No. With a generosity suited to his character, he for obvious reasons fixes on the poor and friendless --- possibly on

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the orphan daughters of those, whose lives have been devoted to the service of their country: of the veteran, who shed his best blood in its defence; or the humble Minister of the gospel, who expended all the pittance his labours could procure, in the maintenance and support of his dependent family.

Having seduced her from her home — having deprived her of her innocence — having cast a dark cloud over her fairest prospects — the traitor, for whom she made these sacrifices, proceeds to reward a tenderness so misplaced, by base and cowardly desertion. The world, like a vast wilderness, is now before her; an inhospitable world, in which she has neither protector, comforter, nor friend. Shall she seek for peace and forgiveness amongst her family and relations? — They are too often hard and inexorable, at the moment, when the exercise of a little well-timed mercy might save her from perdition. Shall she apply to those persons, whose intimacy she enjoyed in her better days? — Alas, feelings too exquisite forbid the thought! Shall she commit to the public ear the story of her misfortunes? — She will meet with derision instead of comfort. She is an object for the pitiless hand of scorn to point at. Shall she attempt, by labour and assiduity, to procure the means of honest subsistence? — To her infinite mortification she sees those employments proper for her sex usurped by a set of beings, whom, if shame cannot, authority should compel, to do service to the community in some manly character: who devour, in effeminate sloth, the bread

bread which these wretches might earn with innocence: whose very industry, if it may be called so, is more pernicious than the idleness of others. Meanwhile she is menaced by misfortune in all its sad varieties; by hunger and thirst; by cold and nakedness. Without means of relief, or place of refuge, she sees before her nothing but miserable suicide, or almost equally miserable prostitution, unless rescued by your liberality, in so affecting, so decisive a moment.

That under these circumstances she should sink deeper, if left to herself, into the abyss of guilt, though very lamentable, is by no means wonderful. Her principles have been impaired; her attachment to virtue is most unhappily weakened. That purity is irrecoverably lost, which was once the grace of her youth, and gave a relish to all the innocent pleasures of her life.

But is not he answerable for every degree of depravity into which the poor deserted female may afterwards be plunged, he, who first undermined so promising a foundation, and banished from her tender heart the fear and the love of God? To the victim of his treachery then, in her most abandoned state, let some degree of pity be extended: there is not a more pitiable object in the world. Were it only, that with a soul, wrung by anguish, she is compelled to assume the appearance of cheerfulness — that amidst penury, disease, and remorse, she must mould her features into a faint and melancholy smile — That while her half-broken heart

is perhaps musing on a disconsolate parent, or the much-loved home from whence she is exiled, she must join in the noise of revelry, and the shout of boisterous intoxication — surely this alone is misery worthy of all compassion. It is such as human nature cannot in any other instance equal.

And shall it then be wondered at, that, despairing of brighter days, and deeming every prospect of happiness excluded from her eyes, she should prematurely seek for refuge, even in death, from the temporal misery that surrounds her? that she should hazard the utmost possible displeasure of the Omnipotent God, by rushing uncalled and unprepared into eternity? However we may abhor the crime itself, we may surely lament the complicated woe by which it is occasioned.

But should she by no act of desperation put a period to her ill-spent life, few, very few years pass over her head, till, sickness and sorrow conspiring to exhaust her frame, the poor outcast is summoned to the presence of the Almighty. Into the melancholy circumstances of her departure the libertine refuses — to do him justice, perhaps he trembles — to enquire. But shall not the Ministers of Christ, whose office frequently leads them to contemplate such scenes, shall they not endeavour to paint the miseries they are compelled to witness? — Vain and fruitless attempt! The sons and daughters of levity will not vouchsafe them a moment's hearing. Those persons in particular, whom it most nearly concerns,

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turn away with disgust from the gloomy narrative. Be it so.—It is a tremendous picture of wretchedness. Let a veil be cast over it for ever.

FROM crimes, from sorrows, and from dangers like these, it is your office, as protecting angels, to deliver the objects of your care. Though they walk in darkness, and have no light, still do you exhort them to trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon their God. You extend to them the hand of mercy. You preserve them from themselves; from their own desponding and agonizing thoughts. By your admonitions they become useful and valuable members of that society, the laws of which they once violated. By you they are assured, that with GOD the contrite soul findeth pardon—and you bid them lift up their eyes to that Saviour, who shed his precious blood for sinners, and inviteth the weary and the heavy laden to come to him for rest and consolation.

These are your works of piety—but it is to be regretted that your means are as yet limited, and that your powers are not as extensive as your wishes. Yet let us hope, that an institution which has struggled against more than common difficulties, will, by your prudence and humanity, shine forth with renewed splendor, and be enabled to do more ample and diffusive good. Nor is this pleasing idea altogether unfounded. Great and respectable accessions have been made to the number of its friends and patrons.—And no endeavours will

will be wanting in its favour, which sound understandings and most benevolent hearts can accomplish. Regulations have already been adopted, arrangements have already been made, the good consequences whereof are sensibly felt, and must every day be more and more conspicuous. Not that the most distant reflection is intended to be thrown on the transactions of past times, or the zeal and discernment of departed benefactors, whose memory is blessed amongst us: but time and experience will necessarily suggest amendments in all human institutions, which while we seek to improve, we must never hope to find in a state of absolute perfection.

In the mean time, allow me once more to lament with you, ye friends and patrons of the poor, that the funds of this patriotic charity are by no means equal to the accomplishment of your benevolent designs. It is still your melancholy task, to refuse admittance to many hapless candidates for your bounty, from utter inability to carry your wishes into execution to their full extent. As yet you are compelled to look at uninhabited mansions, that might afford protection to numbers, whom now, to your infinite regret, you must abandon to the rigour of their destiny. You see them slowly retiring to penury and wretchedness, and casting a look of despair at those walls, wherein they had hoped to find a shelter from the calamities that on every side surround them.

Who

Who then is on the LORD's side, Who?---Where are the advocates for virtue, for humanity? Can there ever be a more favourable opportunity than the present in which they can stand forward? Can there ever be a moment, in which more efficacy can be expected from their endeavours? It is the glory of the present age, that institutions for the benefit of the poor, and the advancement of virtue and religion, do now meet with more than common encouragement. Have we not seen a hand, stretched out as it were from heaven, to rescue from the darkest ignorance thousands and myriads of our fellow-creatures, and to fill their minds with useful and saving knowledge? Have we not seen successful war waged against vice, profaneness, and immorality, by a MONARCH, whose exalted rank reflects not on him such lustre as he derives from his more exalted virtues? Is he not openly assisted in the accomplishment of his design, by the exertions of those among his subjects, who stand forward, illustrious examples, as well as promoters, of all that is great and good? And do we not now, even now, form the sanguine hope, that the captive in distant regions shall feel the blessed effects of that liberality and mercy, for which in other instances this nation is so justly celebrated? Shall we then strain every nerve to extinguish one species of slavery, and shall we not, as far as possible, seek to abolish another? Shall we not earnestly strive to recover those out of the snare of the devil, who have been hitherto taken captive by him at his will? For such undoubtedly are those objects of compassion,

to

to whose relief this sacred establishment is dedicated, and in whose behalf the greatest, the best, the most august of female characters condescends to bestow her honoured name, as Patroness and Protectress.

Withhold not from an institution so very deserving of your assistance, the most ardent and effectual support. As you are men—as you are Britons—as you are Christians—arise and rescue from impending destruction the poor, forlorn, deserted beings, who stand so much in need of your compassionate aid. And doubt not, that the divine acceptance will accompany and prosper your endeavours. This is a subject on which we speak without hesitation. We boldly join the voice of encouragement to that of applause. We are confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

I cannot therefore dismiss you with a better blessing, than is contained in the fervent prayer, THAT YOU MAY LONG CONSULT THE TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF THOSE AROUND YOU—particularly those, who in addition to every other misery, are labouring under the pressure of guilt. From hence will you always derive the purest satisfaction, the only happiness which deserves the name. On these works, done through faith in Christ, depends your future justification. By reflections on these, you will be comforted in that solemn hour, when the world shall retire from your view,
and

and the prospect open into the boundless regions of eternity. By these you will be enabled to support the terrors of your GOD, when he cometh to judgment. And, if the idea be not visionary, that in a better state of existence some remembrance will be had of what has happened here, you will be welcomed to the regions of the blessed, by the grateful voices of those whom you delivered from the malice of the destroyer, by THIS act of your benevolence; who, though they shall acknowledge GOD alone as the Author of their salvation, shall yet regard you as the instruments and dispensers of his mercy towards them: since, as far as mortals can presume to form a judgment, they must have lived in infamy: they must have died in sorrow — they must have perished irretrievably, but for YOU.

And now, let not the adversary triumph; let not the enemy of their eternal happiness rejoice against them. Did they fall? Through divine power, behold, they arise. Did they sit in darkness? JEHOVAH, by the ministry of you his faithful servants, is yet a light unto them. Yea, the LORD shall be unto them an everlasting Light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended.

NOW to FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, Three PERSONS and One GOD, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour, glory, adoration, and praise, world without end. Amen.

BRITISH

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